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Draft plan of action for the first phase (2005-2007) of the proposed world programme for human rights education

Note by the Secretary-General*

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the General Assembly for its consideration and adoption a draft plan of action for the first phase (2005-2007) of the proposed world programme for human rights education, focusing on the primary and secondary school systems, prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and other governmental and non-governmental actors in accordance with Commission on Human Rights resolution 2004/71.

* The present report was submitted on 25 October 2004 to allow adequate consultations for the preparation of the enclosed draft plan of action, as requested by the Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 2004/71.

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Summary

The present report contains a draft plan of action for the first phase (2005-2007) of the proposed world programme for human rights education, prepared jointly by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

From May to July 2004 a first draft was prepared by OHCHR and UNESCO on the basis of, inter alia, relevant United Nations instruments and documents, final recommendations of relevant regional intergovernmental meetings as well as correspondence sent by Governments to OHCHR and summarized in the High Commissioner's reports.

The first draft was reviewed by over 50 specialists from all continents from ministries of education, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, national human rights institutions and United Nations agencies during an expert meeting organized jointly by OHCHR and UNESCO in Geneva from 13 to 15 September 2004. Subsequently, OHCHR and UNESCO reviewed and finalized the draft plan of action on the basis of the experts' comments.

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I. The world programme for human rights education

> "The World Conference on Human Rights considers human rights education, training and public information essential for the promotion and achievement of stable and harmonious relations among communities and for fostering mutual understanding, tolerance and peace" (Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, Part II.D, para. 78).

Context and definition of human rights education

1. The international community has increasingly expressed a consensus that human rights education constitutes a fundamental contribution to the realization of human rights. Human rights education aims at developing an understanding of everybody's common responsibility to make human rights a reality in each community and in the society at large. In this sense, it contributes to the long-term prevention of human rights abuses and violent conflicts, the promotion of equality and sustainable development and the enhancement of people's participation in decision-making processes within a democratic system, as stated in resolution 2004/71 of the Commission on Human Rights.

2. Provisions on human rights education have been incorporated in many international instruments, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (article 26), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (article 13), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (article 29), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (article 10), the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (article 7) and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (Part I, paras. 33-34 and Part II, paras. 78-82), as well as the Declaration and Programme of Action of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance held in Durban, South Africa, in 2001 (Declaration, paras. 95-97 and Programme of Action, paras. 129-139).

3. In accordance with these instruments, which provide elements of a definition of human rights education as agreed by the international community, human rights education can be defined as education, training and information aiming at building a universal culture of human rights through the sharing of knowledge, imparting of skills and moulding of attitudes directed to:

(a) The strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms;

(b) The full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity;

(c) The promotion of understanding, tolerance, gender equality and friendship among all nations, indigenous peoples and racial, national, ethnic, religious and linguistic groups;

(d) The enabling of all persons to participate effectively in a free and democratic society governed by the rule of law;

(e) The building and maintenance of peace;

(f) The promotion of people-centred sustainable development and social justice.

4. Human rights education encompasses:

(a) Knowledge and skills — learning about human rights and mechanisms for their protection, as well as acquiring skills to apply them in daily life;

(b) Values, attitudes and behaviour — developing values and reinforcing attitudes and behaviour which uphold human rights;

(c) Action — taking action to defend and promote human rights.

5. With a view to encouraging human rights education initiatives, Member States have adopted various specific international frameworks for action, such as the World Public Information Campaign on Human Rights focusing on the development and dissemination of human rights information materials, the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education,1995-2004 and its Plan of Action, which encouraged the elaboration and implementation of comprehensive, effective and sustainable strategies for human rights education at the national level, as well as the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010).

6. In 2004, the Economic and Social Council, welcoming Commission on Human Rights resolution 2004/71, requested the General Assembly to proclaim, at its fifty-ninth session, a world programme for human rights education to begin on 1 January 2005 and to be structured in consecutive phases, in order to further focus national human rights education efforts on specific sectors/issues periodically identified by the Commission on Human Rights.

Objectives of the world programme

7. The objectives of the world programme for human rights education are:

(a) To promote the development of a culture of human rights;

(b) To promote a common understanding, based on international instruments, of basic principles and methodologies for human rights education;

(c) To ensure a focus on human rights education at the national, regional and international levels;

(d) To provide a common collective framework for action by all relevant actors;

(e) To enhance partnership and cooperation at all levels;

(f) To take stock of and support existing human rights education programmes, to highlight successful practices, and to provide an incentive to continue and/or expand them and to develop new ones.

Principles for human rights education activities[1]

8. Educational activities within the world programme shall:

(a) Promote the interdependence, indivisibility and universality of human rights, including civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights and the right to development;

(b) Foster respect for and appreciation of differences, and opposition to discrimination on the basis of race, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, physical or mental condition, etc.;

(c) Encourage analysis of chronic and emerging human rights problems (including poverty, violent conflicts and discrimination), which would lead to solutions consistent with human rights standards;

(d) Empower communities and individuals to identify their human rights needs and to ensure that they are met;

(e) Build on the human rights principles embedded within the different cultural contexts, and take into account historical and social developments in each country;

(f) Foster knowledge of and skills to use local, national, regional and international human rights instruments and mechanisms for the protection of human rights;

(g) Make use of participatory pedagogies that include knowledge, critical analysis and skills for action furthering human rights;

(h) Foster teaching and learning environments free from want and fear that encourage participation, enjoyment of human rights and the full development of the human personality;

(i) Be relevant to the daily life of the learners, engaging them in a dialogue about ways and means of transforming human rights from the expression of abstract norms to the reality of their social, economic, cultural and political conditions.

II. The first phase (2005-2007): a plan of action for human rights education in the primary and secondary school systems

> "The World Conference on Human Rights reaffirms that States are duty-bound ... to ensure that education is aimed at strengthening the respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms [and that] this should be integrated in the educational policies at the national as well as international levels" (Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, Part I, para. 33).

9. In accordance with resolution 2004/71 of the Commission on Human Rights, the first phase (2005-2007) of the world programme for human rights education will focus on the primary and secondary school systems.

Context

10. This plan of action draws on the principles and frameworks set by international human rights instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and related guidelines adopted by the Committee on the Rights of the Child (in particular, general comment No. 1 (2001) on the aims of education), the 1993 Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action and the Declaration and Integrated Framework of Action on Education for

Peace, Human Rights and Democracy. It also draws on international declarations and programmes on education.

11. The Dakar Framework for Action on Education For All: Meeting Our Collective Commitments, adopted at the World Education Forum in 2000, the major international platform and collective commitment to the achievement of the goals and targets of Education For All (EFA), reaffirms a vision of education supported by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and geared towards learning to live together. Education is considered key "to sustainable development and peace and stability" (para. 6), by fostering social cohesion and empowering people to become active participants in social transformation. Goal 6 of the Dakar Framework is to improve all aspects of the quality of education, and ensuring their excellence so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.[2] It provides the basis for a concept of quality education that goes beyond reading, writing and arithmetic, and which, while necessarily dynamic, is strongly rights-based and entails democratic citizenship, values and solidarity as important outcomes.

12. A rights-based quality education encompasses the concept of education for sustainable development as contained in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Education is seen as a process for addressing important questions such as rural development, health care, community involvement, HIV/AIDS, the environment, traditional and indigenous knowledge, and wider ethical issues such as human values and human rights. It is further stated that the success in the struggle for sustainable development requires an approach to education that strengthens "our engagement in support of other values — especially justice and fairness — and the awareness that we share a common destiny with others".[3] The world programme for human rights education would create synergies with the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014), coupling efforts to address issues of common concern.

13. One of the Millennium Development Goals adopted by the international community on the occasion of the United Nations Millennium Summit in 2000 is the promotion of universal access to primary education, which is still a major challenge. Although enrolment rates have been increasing in several regions, the quality of education remains low for many. For example, gender biases, threats to the physical and emotional security of girls and gender-insensitive curricula can all conspire against the realization of the right to education (see A/56/326, para. 94). This plan of action aims at contributing to the achievement of this Millennium Development Goal by promoting rights-based quality education.

14. The plan of action is also placed within the context of action of Member States and others to promote the universal right to literacy, in particular within the framework of the United Nations Literacy Decade (2003-2012), literacy being a key learning tool towards the fulfilment of the right to education.

Human rights education in the school system

15. Human rights education is widely considered as an integral part of the right to education. As stated by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in its general comment No. 1, "the education to which each child has a right is one designed to

provide the child with life skills, to strengthen the child's capacity to enjoy the full range of human rights and to promote a culture which is infused by appropriate human rights values" (para. 2). Such education "is for every child an indispensable tool for her or his efforts to achieve in the course of her or his life a balanced, human rights-friendly response to the challenges that accompany a period of fundamental change driven by globalization, new technologies and related phenomena" (para. 3).

16. The Convention on the Rights of the Child attaches particular importance to the process by which education is to be promoted, as underlined in the general comment: "Efforts to promote the enjoyment of other rights must not be undermined, and should be reinforced, by the values imparted in the educational process. This includes not only the content of the curriculum but also the educational processes, the pedagogical methods and the environment within which education takes place".[4] Accordingly, human rights should be learned through both content transmission and experience, and should be practised at all levels of the school system.

17. In this sense, human rights education promotes a rights-based approach to education and should be understood as a process that includes:

(a) "Human rights through education": ensuring that all the components and processes of learning, including curricula, materials, methods and training are conducive to the learning of human rights;

(b) "Human rights in education": ensuring the respect of the human rights of all actors, and the practice of rights, within the education system.

18. Therefore, human rights education in the primary and secondary school systems necessarily entails:

(a) Policies — developing in a participatory way and adopting coherent educational policies, legislation and strategies that are human rights-based, including curriculum improvement and training policies for teachers and other educational personnel;

(b) Policy implementation — planning the implementation of the above-mentioned educational policies by taking appropriate organizational measures and by facilitating the involvement of all stakeholders;

(c) Learning environment — the school environment itself respects and promotes human rights and fundamental freedoms. It provides the opportunity for all school actors (students, teachers, staff and administrators and parents) to practise human rights and solidarity through real-life examples and activities. It enables children to express their views freely and to participate fully in school life;[5]

(d) Teaching and learning — all teaching and learning processes and tools are rights-based (for instance, the content and objectives of the curriculum, participatory and democratic practices and methodologies, appropriate materials including the review and revision of existing textbooks, etc.);

(e) Education and professional development of teachers and other personnel — providing the teaching profession and school leadership, through pre- and in-service training, with the necessary knowledge, understanding, skills and

competencies to facilitate the learning and practice of human rights in schools, as well as with appropriate working conditions and status.

A detailed description of the following components and related courses of action, to serve as a reference tool, is provided in the annex.

19. By promoting a rights-based approach to education, human rights education enables the education system to fulfil its fundamental mission to secure quality education for all. Accordingly, it contributes to improving the effectiveness of the national education system as a whole, which in turn has a fundamental role in each country's economic, social and political development. It provides, among others, the following benefits:

(a) Improved quality of learning achievements, by promoting child-centred and participatory teaching and learning practices and processes, as well as a new role for the teaching profession;

(b) Increased access to and participation in schooling, by creating a rights-based learning environment that is inclusive and welcoming and fosters universal values, equal opportunities, diversity and non-discrimination;

(c) A contribution to social cohesion and conflict prevention, by supporting the social and emotional development of the child and by introducing democratic citizenship and values.

20. All efforts taking place in the school system towards peace education, citizenship and values education, multicultural education, global education or education for sustainable development do include human rights principles in their content and methodologies. It is important that all of them, using this plan of action as a reference, promote a rights-based approach to education, which goes beyond teaching and learning and aims at providing a platform for systemic improvement of the school sector in the context of national education reforms.

Specific objectives of the plan of action

21. Considering the overall objectives of the world programme for human rights education (see section I above), this plan aims to achieve the following specific objectives:

(a) To promote the inclusion and practice of human rights in the primary and secondary school systems;

(b) To support the development, adoption and implementation of comprehensive, effective and sustainable national human rights education strategies in school systems, and/or the review and improvement of existing initiatives;

(c) To provide guidelines on key components of human rights education in the school system;

(d) To facilitate the provision of support to Member States by international, regional, national and local organizations;

(e) To support networking and cooperation among local, national, regional and international institutions.

22. This plan provides:

(a) A definition of human rights education in the school system based on internationally agreed principles;

(b) A user-friendly guide to developing and/or improving human rights education in the school system, by proposing concrete actions for implementation at the national level;

(c) A flexible guide which can be adapted to different contexts and situations.

III. Implementation strategy at the national level

Introduction

23. This plan is an incentive and a means to develop and strengthen human rights education in primary and secondary school systems at the national level. Its underlying assumption is that a process of change and improvement should happen by taking several simultaneous actions in different areas (see annex). To be effective, such a process should be organized along the lines of widely accepted stages of a development cycle. Realistic goals and means for action need to be established in accordance with a country's context, priorities and capacity, and based on previous national efforts (such as those undertaken within the framework of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995-2004).

24. This plan and its implementation strategy recognize that the situation of human rights education in the school system differs from country to country. For instance, human rights education may be largely missing in some countries; other countries may have national policies and programmes, but little implementation; in other cases there may be grass-roots initiatives and projects in schools, often supported by international organizations, but not necessarily part of a national policy; other countries may be very supportive of human rights education with well-developed national policies and actions. Whatever the situation, the development or improvement of human rights education is to be on each country's education agenda.

25. The implementation strategy addresses firstly the ministries of education, which have the main responsibility for primary and secondary education at national level. Ministries of education are therefore the main leaders and actors. The implementation strategy also addresses other relevant institutions (see paras. 28-30 below), which should be involved in all stages of planning and implementation.

Stages of the implementation strategy

26. This section proposes four stages to facilitate the process of planning, implementation and evaluation of human rights education in the school system. They provide guidelines to assist Member States in implementing this plan of action.

STAGE 1: Analysis of the current situation of human rights education in the school system

Actions

- Address the question: Where are we?
- Collect information on and analyse the following:
  - Current situation of the primary and secondary school system, including the situation of human rights in schools;
  - Historical and cultural backgrounds that may influence human rights education in the school system;
  - Human rights education initiatives, if any, in primary and secondary school systems;
  - Achievements and shortcomings of and obstacles to initiatives undertaken within the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995-2004;
  - Involvement of various actors, such as governmental institutions, national human rights institutions, universities, research institutes and NGOs, in human rights education in the school system;
  - Good human rights education practice existing at national and regional levels;
  - Role of similar types of education (education for sustainable development, peace education, global education, multicultural education, citizenship and values education) that may exist in the country.
- Determine which measures and components of human rights education exist already, based on the reference tool provided in the annex. Other elements for the analysis would be the national reports to the United Nations treaty bodies, as well as reports produced within the framework of the Decade at national and international levels.
- Identify key features and areas by analysing and determining advantages, disadvantages, as well as opportunities for and limitations to human rights education in the school system.
- Draw conclusions on the state of existence and implementation of human rights education.
- Consider how to build on advantages and lessons learned, and how to use opportunities.
- Consider changes and measures that are necessary to deal with disadvantages and limitations.

Outputs

- National study on human rights education in the primary and secondary school systems.
- Wide dissemination of the results of the study at the national level through, for example, publications, a conference or public debate to elaborate orientations for the national implementation strategy for human rights education in the school system, etc.

STAGE 2: Setting priorities and developing a national implementation strategy

Actions

- Address the question: Where do we want to go and how?
- Define a mission statement, i.e. the basic goal for implementing human rights education in the school system.
- Fix objectives using the annex as a reference.
- Set priorities on the basis of the findings of the national study. These priorities may take into consideration the most pressing needs and/or the opportunities available.
- Focus on issues potentially leading to impact: What can we really do?
- Give priority to measures that will secure sustainable change vis-à-vis ad hoc activities.
- Set the direction of the national implementation strategy and link objectives with available resources, by identifying:
  - Inputs: allocation of available resources (human, financial, time);
  - Activities (tasks, responsibilities, timeframe and milestones);
  - Outputs: concrete products (e.g. new legislation, studies, capacity-building seminars, educational materials, revision of textbooks, etc.);
  - Outcomes: achieved results.

Output

A national implementation strategy for human rights education in the primary and secondary school system that identifies objectives and priorities and foresees at least some implementation activities for the period 2005-2007.

STAGE 3: Implementing and monitoring

Actions

- The guiding idea should be: getting there.
- Disseminate the national implementation strategy.
- Initiate the implementation of the planned activities within the national implementation strategy.
- Monitor the implementation using fixed milestones.

Output

Depending on the priorities of the national implementation strategy, outputs can be, for instance, legislation, mechanisms for coordination of the national implementation strategy, new or revised textbooks and learning materials, training

courses, participatory teaching and/or learning methodologies, non-discrimination policies protecting all members of the school community, etc.

STAGE 4: Evaluating

Actions

- Address the question: Did we get there and how well?
- Adopt evaluation as a method of accountability and a means to learn and to improve a possible next phase of activities.
- Use self-evaluation as well as independent external evaluation to review implementation.
- Check the fulfilment of the set objectives and examine the implementation process.
- Acknowledge, disseminate, and celebrate the achievement of results.

Outputs

- National report on the outcomes of the national implementation strategy for human rights education in the primary and secondary school system.
- Recommendations for future action based on lessons learned throughout the implementation process.

Minimum action

27. Member States are encouraged to undertake as minimum action during the first phase (2005-2007) of the world programme the following:

(a) An analysis of the current situation of human rights education in the school system (stage 1);

(b) Setting of priorities and the development of the national implementation strategy (stage 2);

(c) The initial implementation of planned activities.

Actors

28. Main responsibility for the implementation of this plan of action rests with the ministries of education through their relevant agencies dealing with such concerns as:

(a) Educational policy;

(b) Programme planning;

(c) Curriculum development;

(d) Teaching and learning material development;

(e) Pre- and in-service training of teachers and other educational personnel;

(f) Teaching and learning methodologies;

(g) Inclusive education;

(h) Regional/provincial/local administration;

(i) Research;

(j) Dissemination of information.

29. The implementation of this plan of action needs the close collaboration of other institutions, namely:

(a) Teachers' colleges and faculties of education of universities;

(b) Teachers' unions, professional organizations and accrediting institutions;

(c) National, federal, local and state legislative bodies, including education, development and human rights parliamentary committees;

(d) National human rights institutions such as ombudsmen and human rights commissions;

(e) National Commissions for UNESCO;

(f) National/local groups/organizations, including, for example, national committees for the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and other community-based organizations;

(g) National branches of international non-governmental organizations;

(h) Parents' associations;

(i) Students' associations;

(j) Education research institutes;

(k) National and local human rights resource and training centres.

30. It also needs the support of other stakeholders such as:

(a) Other relevant ministries (welfare, labour, justice, women, youth);

(b) Youth organizations;

(c) Media representatives;

(d) Religious institutions;

(e) Cultural, social and community leaders;

(f) Indigenous peoples and minority groups;

(g) The business community.

Funding

31. As mentioned in section II above, human rights education in the national education system can also assist in improving the system's effectiveness. It provides a set of guiding principles to support educational reform and helps to respond to current challenges of education systems worldwide, such as access to and equal opportunities in education, the contribution of education to social inclusion

and cohesion, the role and status of teachers, the relevance of education for students and the society, the improvement of students' achievements and educational governance.

32. Having this in mind, funding for human rights education can be made available also within the context of resources allocated to the national education system in general, and in particular by:

(a) Optimizing already committed national funds to quality education in order to implement this plan;

(b) Coordinating external funds and allocation practices based on the actions set out in this plan;

(c) Creating targeted partnerships between the public and private sectors.

IV. Coordination of the implementation of the plan of action

National level

33. Main responsibility for the implementation of the plan of action shall rest with the ministry of education in each country. The ministry should assign or strengthen a relevant department or unit responsible for coordinating the elaboration, implementation and monitoring of the national implementation strategy.

34. The coordinating department or unit would engage relevant departments within the ministry of education, other ministries and concerned national actors (see section III, paras. 28-30 above) in the elaboration, implementation and monitoring of the national implementation strategy. In this regard, it could facilitate the establishment of a human rights education coalition of those actors.

35. The coordinating department or unit would be called upon to provide updated and detailed information on national progress made in this area to the United Nations inter-agency coordinating committee (see para. 38 below).

36. Moreover, the coordinating department or unit would work in close cooperation with relevant national agencies responsible for the elaboration of country reports to the United Nations treaty bodies, in order to ensure that progress in human rights education is included in those reports.

37. Member States are also encouraged to identify and support a resource centre for collecting and disseminating initiatives and information (good practices from diverse contexts and countries, educational materials, events) on human rights education at national level.

International level

38. A United Nations inter-agency coordinating committee, composed of OHCHR, UNESCO, UNICEF, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other relevant international agencies, including the World Bank, will be set up and be responsible for the international coordination of activities under this plan of action. The secretariat of this committee will be provided by OHCHR.

39. The committee will meet regularly to follow up on the implementation of this plan of action, mobilize resources and support actions at country level. In this regard, it may invite to its meetings, on an ad hoc basis, other relevant international and regional institutions, experts and actors, such as members of the United Nations treaty bodies, the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, and others.

40. The committee will be responsible for liasing with the United Nations country teams or international agencies represented in the country to ensure the follow-up of the plan of action and United Nations system-wide support to the national implementation strategy, in line with the Secretary-General's reform programme which provides for coordinated United Nations action at the country level to support national human rights protection systems (A/57/387 and Corr.1, action 2).

41. The United Nations treaty bodies, when examining reports of States parties, will be called upon to place emphasis on the obligation of States parties to implement human rights education in the school systems and to reflect that emphasis in the concluding observations.

42. Furthermore, all relevant thematic and country mechanisms of the Commission on Human Rights (e.g. Special Rapporteurs and representatives, in particular the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, as well as working groups) will be called upon to include systematically in their reports progress in human rights education in the school system, as relevant to their mandate.

43. The committee may consider seeking assistance of regional and sub-regional institutions and organizations with a view to monitor more effectively the implementation of this plan of action.

V. International cooperation and support

44. International cooperation and support towards the implementation of this plan of action will be provided by:

(a) The United Nations system;

(b) Other international intergovernmental organizations;

(c) Regional intergovernmental organizations;

(d) Regional organizations of ministers of education;

(e) International and regional forums of ministers of education;

(f) International and regional non-governmental organizations;

(g) Regional human rights resource and documentation centres;

(h) International and regional financial institutions (World Bank, regional development banks, etc.), as well as bilateral funding agencies.

45. It is indispensable that those actors collaborate closely among themselves in order to maximize resources, avoid duplication and ensure coherence for the implementation of this plan of action.

46. The objective of international cooperation and support will be the strengthening of national and local capacities for human rights education in the

primary and secondary school systems within the framework of the national implementation strategy dealt with in section III of this plan of action.

47. The above-mentioned organizations and institutions may consider undertaking, among others, the following actions:

(a) Support ministries of education in the elaboration, implementation and monitoring of the national implementation strategy, including the development of related specialized tools;

(b) Provide support to other national actors involved, in particular national and local non-governmental organizations, professional associations and other civil society organizations;

(c) Facilitate information-sharing among concerned actors at the national, regional and international levels by identifying, collecting and disseminating information on good practices, as well as on available materials, institutions and programmes, through traditional and electronic means;

(d) Support existing networks among actors in human rights education and promote the creation of new ones at the national, regional and international levels;

(e) Support effective human rights training (including training on participatory teaching and learning methodologies) for teachers, teacher trainers, education officials and NGO workers;

(f) Support research on the implementation of national human rights education in schools, including studies on practical measures for their improvement.

48. In order to mobilize resources to support the implementation of this plan of action, international and regional financial institutions, as well as bilateral funding agencies will be called upon to explore ways of linking their funding programmes on education to this plan of action and to human rights education in general.

VI. Evaluation

49. At the conclusion of the first phase (2005-2007) of the world programme, each country will undertake an evaluation of actions implemented under this plan of action. The evaluation will take into consideration progress made in a number of areas, such as legal frameworks and policies, curricula, teaching and learning processes and tools, revision of textbooks, teacher training, improvement of the school environment, etc. The Member States will be called upon to provide their final national evaluation report to the United Nations inter-agency coordinating committee.

50. To this end, international and regional organizations will provide assistance to build or strengthen national capacities for evaluation.

51. The inter-agency coordinating committee will prepare a final evaluation report based on national evaluation reports, in cooperation with relevant international, regional and non-governmental organizations. The report will be submitted to the General Assembly at its sixty-third session.

Notes

[1] The section on the principles for human rights education activities is based on the guidelines for national plans of action for human rights education developed for the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995-2004 (A/52/469/Add.1 and Corr.1).

[2] According to general comment No. 1 (2001) of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on the aims of education, life skills include "the ability to make well-balanced decisions; to resolve conflicts in a non-violent manner; and to develop a healthy lifestyle, good social relationships and responsibility, critical thinking, creative talents, and other abilities which give children the tools needed to pursue their options in life" (para. 9).

[3] UNESCO, *Education for Sustainability. From Rio to Johannesburg: lessons learned from a decade of commitment* (Paris, 2002).

[4] General comment No. 1, para. 8. In paragraph 12 of the general comment, the Committee also stresses that "it should be emphasized that the type of teaching that is focused primarily on accumulation of knowledge, prompting competition and leading to an excessive burden of work on children, may seriously hamper the harmonious development of the child to the fullest potential of his or her abilities and talents".

[5] "The participation of children in school life, the creation of school communities and student councils, peer education and peer counselling, and the involvement of children in school disciplinary proceedings should be promoted as part of the process of learning and experiencing the realization of rights" (General comment No. 1 (2001), para. 8).

Annex

Components of human rights education in the primary and secondary school systems

1. Each country's context influences considerably the possibilities and strategies for promoting the inclusion and practice of human rights education in the school system. However, beyond the ensuing diversity, common trends and approaches can be identified for developing human rights education. The five components set out, in a generic way, in this annex are based on existing worldwide successful experiences as well as studies and research, including consultations carried out in preparation of the present plan of action and the mid-term (2000) and final (2004) evaluations of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995-2004. The components compile good practice, which the main actors of this plan of action are invited to strive towards gradually and progressively. The components are indicative and not prescriptive. They propose options and recommend possible courses of action, and should serve as a reference tool. They will need to be adapted to each context in line with the national implementation strategy of this plan of action.

A. Policies

2. Education policies are understood as clear and coherent statements of commitments. Prepared at the relevant government level, mainly national, but also regional and municipal, and in cooperation with all stakeholders, they include principles, definitions and objectives and serve as a normative reference throughout the education system and for all educational actors.

3. Human rights education, which promotes a rights-based approach to education, is to be stated explicitly in objectives of educational policy development and reform, as well as in quality standards of education.

4. The rights-based approach to education implies that the school system becomes conscious of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Human rights are infused and implemented in the whole education system and in all learning environments. Human rights are included both as an educational aim and as quality criteria of education within key reference texts such as the constitution, educational policy frameworks, educational legislation, and national curricula and programmes.

5. To this end, the following measures correspond to key features of policy-making for human rights education within the school system:

(a) Adopt a participatory approach to policy development by involving non-governmental organizations (NGOs), teachers associations and unions, professional and research bodies, civil society organizations and other stakeholders in the preparation of educational policy texts;

(b) Fulfil international obligations on human rights education:[a]

[a] Such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the Convention against Discrimination in Education.

(i) Promote the ratification of the international instruments concerning the right to education;

(ii) Include information on human rights education in the national reports to the relevant international monitoring mechanisms, such as the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, etc.;

(iii) Cooperate with NGOs, other sectors of civil society and human rights education specialists in preparing the above-mentioned national reports;

(iv) Publicize and comply with the recommendations made by the international monitoring mechanisms;

(c) Develop policies and legislation for a rights-based approach to education and human rights education:

(i) Include human rights education in education laws;

(ii) Ensure that all legislation is aligned with the principles of human rights education and monitor inconsistency in legislation;

(iii) Adopt specific legislation on human rights education;

(iv) Ensure that policies are based on relevant research in human rights education;

(v) Empower schools and schools' leadership to implement autonomy in decision-making and innovation;

(vi) Ensure that policies for reporting educational performance (accountability) are in line with human rights principles and establish specific accountability policies for human rights education;

(vii) Provide guidelines to local authorities on their roles and responsibilities in implementing and supporting human rights education;

(d) Ensure coherence in policy development:

(i) Include human rights education in national sectoral plans for primary and secondary education; in Education for All (EFA) national plans; in national policy frameworks as part of the Decade on Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014);

(ii) Include human rights education in national human rights plans, in national action plans against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and in national poverty reduction strategies;

(iii) Ensure coherence, links and synergies between the different plans and their respective sections on human rights education;

(iv) Relate human rights education policies and other sectoral policies (e.g. judicial, social, youth, health);

(e) Include human rights education in the curriculum:

(i) Ensure that policies are based on relevant research in human rights education;

(ii) Acknowledge, in the overall national curriculum and educational standards, human rights values, knowledge and attitudes as basic skills and competencies, complementing literacy and numeracy skills and competencies;

(iii) Prepare a national curriculum specifically for human rights education, setting out concepts and goals, teaching and learning objectives and approaches;

(iv) Define the status of human rights education within the curriculum, according to the school level, and possibly as obligatory or optional, subject-based and/or cross-curricular (whereby human rights are included in all curriculum subjects);

(v) Make the teaching and learning of human rights a full-fledged and explicit component particularly of citizenship education, social studies and history;

(vi) Make the teaching and learning of human rights a full-fledged and explicit component of the school-based curriculum (teaching and learning programmes decided by schools);

(vii) Include human rights education in vocational education and training;

(viii) Adopt guidelines for revising textbooks so that they are in line with human rights principles as well as for developing specific textbooks for human rights education;

(ix) Promote a human rights-based approach to school governance, management, discipline procedures, inclusion policies and other regulations and practices affecting the school culture and access to education;

(x) Include human rights as part of students' qualification requirements;

(xi) Develop appropriate procedures for the assessment of and feedback on students' achievements on human rights values, knowledge and attitudes;

(f) Adopt a comprehensive training policy on human rights education including:

(i) The training of trainers, the training of head teachers, pre-service and in-service training of teachers, and the training of other educational personnel;

(ii) Information on the rights, responsibilities and participation of students and teachers in the all pre- and in-service teacher training policies and programmes;

(iii) Recognizing, accrediting and supporting NGOs and other sectors of civil society carrying out training activities in human rights education;

(iv) Foreseeing human rights as a criterion for the qualification, accreditation and career development of educational staff and the accreditation of training activities of NGOs.

B. Planning policy implementation

6. Effective educational policy development and reform requires both explicit policy statements and a consistent implementation strategy, including clearly

defined measures, mechanisms, responsibilities and resources. Such an implementation strategy is a means of ensuring coherence, monitoring and accountability of policies. It helps avoid a gap between policy and practice, rhetoric and reality, as well as situations where practices are happening, if at all, in a dispersed or inconsistent way, or on an ad hoc or voluntary basis.

7. Human rights education implies changes in the whole education system. But policy statements and commitments per se are not enough to ensure such educational change. Planning policy implementation is a key feature of effective human rights education.

8. The implementation of human rights education policies needs to be in line with current trends in educational governance towards devolution of powers, democratic governance, school autonomy, and sharing of rights and responsibilities within the education system. The responsibility for the education system cannot or should not lie with the Ministry of Education only, given the multiplicity of stakeholders such as the local government and the school district; head teachers, teachers and other educational staff, their organizations and unions; students and parents; research bodies and training institutions; NGOs, other sectors of civil society, and communities.

9. The fact that both national authorities and the local/school level are responsible for education governance, improvement and innovation implies specific roles for each level: the role of central authorities is to set common policy frameworks and implementation and accountability mechanisms; the role of the local/school level is to find ways to take into account and tackle local diversity and needs and develop specific school profiles, including in human rights. In addition, the ownership of educational goals and the development of teaching and learning practices by teachers and other educational staff, parents and students needs to be ensured.

10. In this context, the following aspects are indicative of good practice for the organization of policy implementation and for key implementation measures by national authorities:

(a) Organization of policy implementation:

(i) Prepare a national implementation strategy in the field of human rights education including the type of measures, the division of tasks and identification of responsibilities of relevant educational institutions, the communication and cooperation procedures between these institutions, the timeline for the policy implementation with identified milestones (see also stage 2 of the national implementation strategy of this plan of action);

(ii) Assign or strengthen a department/unit within the Ministry of Education responsible for coordinating the national implementation strategy;

(iii) Ensure cooperation between the different sectors and departments related to human rights and human rights education such as those dealing with social and legal issues, youth, gender, etc.;

(iv) Facilitate the establishment of a human rights education coalition of all relevant actors involved in this field to ensure coherence of implementation;

(b) Measures for policy implementation:

(i) Allocate sufficient resources (financial, human, time) for human rights education;

(ii) Establish appropriate mechanisms so that stakeholders can be fully and effectively involved in policy development and implementation;

(iii) Publish and disseminate the above-mentioned national implementation strategy, and ensure it is debated and endorsed by relevant actors, beneficiaries and the public at large;

(iv) Organize communication and cooperation between officials responsible for the different plans indicated in section A, paragraph 5 (d), of this annex;

(v) Consider piloting the human rights education approach in a selection of schools before mainstreaming it into the whole education system;

(vi) Identify and support a resource centre for collecting and disseminating initiatives and information (good practices from diverse contexts and countries, educational materials, events) on human rights education at the national level;

(vii) Support and promote research, for example, on the knowledge of human rights, practices of human rights education in schools, students' learning outcomes and the impact of human rights education;

(viii) Encourage research in human rights education by academic centres specifically devoted to human rights education, as well as through cooperation between schools, research institutes and university faculties;

(ix) Participate in international surveys and comparative studies;

(x) Establish a rights-based quality assurance system (including school self-evaluation and development planning, school inspection, etc.) for education in general and create specific quality assurance mechanisms for human rights education;

(xi) Involve learners and educators directly in carrying out monitoring and evaluation processes so as to promote empowerment and self-reflection.

C. The learning environment[b]

11. Human rights education goes beyond cognitive learning and includes the social and emotional development of all those involved in the learning and teaching process. It aims at developing a culture of human rights, where human rights are practised and lived within the school community and through interaction with the wider surrounding community.

12. To this end, it is essential to ensure that human rights teaching and learning happen in a human rights-based learning environment. It is essential to ensure that educational objectives, practices and the organization of the schools are consistent with human rights values and principles. Likewise, it is important that the culture

[b] This section uses the term "Learning environment" mainly to address issues related to school governance and management. It does not include other aspects of the learning environment, such as school supplies, sanitation, health, clean water, food, etc.

and the community within and beyond the school are also embedding those principles.

13. A rights-based school is characterized by mutual understanding, respect and responsibility. It fosters equal opportunities, a sense of belonging, autonomy, dignity and self-esteem for all members of the school community. It is a school that is child-centred, relevant and meaningful, where human rights are identified, explicitly and distinctively, for everybody as learning objectives and as the school philosophy/ethos.

14. A rights-based school is the responsibility of all members of the school community, with the school leadership having the primary responsibility to create favourable and enabling conditions to reach these aims.

15. A rights-based school will ensure the existence and effectiveness of the following elements:

(a) Policy statements and implementation provisions for human rights in the school will be explicit and shared and will include:

(i) A charter on students' and teachers' rights and responsibilities based on a clear distribution of roles and tasks;

(ii) A code of conduct for a school free of violence, sexual abuse, harassment and corporal punishments, including procedures for resolving conflicts and dealing with violence and bullying;

(iii) Non-discrimination policies protecting all members of the school community including admissions, scholarships, advancement, promotion, special programmes, eligibility and opportunities;

(iv) The recognition and celebration of human rights achievements through festivities, awards and prizes;

(b) Teachers in a rights-based school will have:

(i) An explicit mandate from the school leadership concerning human rights education;

(ii) Education and ongoing professional development in human rights content and methodology;

(iii) Opportunities for developing and implementing new and innovative good practices in human rights education;

(iv) Mechanisms for sharing good practices, including networking of human rights educators at local, national and international levels;

(v) Policies for the recruitment, retention and promotion of teachers that reflect human rights principles;

(c) Students in a rights-based school will have:

(i) Opportunities for self-expression, responsibilities and participation in decision-making, in accordance with their age and evolving capacity;

(ii) Opportunities for organising their own activities, for representing, mediating and advocating their interests;

(d) Interaction will exist between the school, local government and the wider community, including:

(i) Awareness-raising of parents and families about children's rights and key principles of human rights education;

(ii) Involvement of parents in human rights education initiatives and projects;

(iii) Participation of parents in school decision-making through parents' representative organizations;

(iv) Extracurricular student projects and service in the community, particularly on human rights issues;

(v) Collaboration with youth groups, civil society and local government for awareness-raising and student support opportunities;

(vi) International exchanges.

D. Teaching and learning

16. Within the school system, teaching and learning are the key processes of human rights education.

17. The legal and political basis for what these processes entail and how they are to be organized in primary and secondary education need to be provided by the human rights education policies and through the education and professional development of teachers and other educational staff.

18. Introducing or improving human rights education in the school system requires adopting a holistic approach to teaching and learning, by integrating programme objectives and content, resources, methodologies, assessment and evaluation; by looking beyond the classroom; and by building partnerships between different members of the school community

19. The following aspects are necessary for achieving quality human rights teaching and learning. They are addressed to policy makers at national and school levels, teachers and other school personnel:

(a) Concerning the teaching and learning contents and objectives:

(i) Define the basic human rights skills and competences to be acquired;

(ii) Include human rights education in all aspects of the curriculum starting as early as possible in primary education;

(iii) Adapt the learning content and objectives of human rights education to the students' age and evolving capacity;

(iv) Give equal importance to cognitive (knowledge and skills) and social/affective (values, attitudes, behaviours) learning outcomes;

(v) Relate human rights teaching and learning to the daily lives and concerns of students;

(b) Concerning teaching and learning practices and methodologies:

(i) Adopt a teaching style that is coherent in terms of human rights, respect the dignity of each student and provide equal opportunities for them;

(ii) Create a child-friendly, trustful, secure and democratic atmosphere in the classroom and school community;

(iii) Adopt learner-centred methods and approaches that empower students and encourage their active participation, cooperative learning, and a sense of solidarity, creativity and self-esteem;

(iv) Adopt methods appropriate to the students' development level, abilities and learning styles;

(v) Adopt experience-based learning methods whereby students can learn by doing and put human rights into practice;

(vi) Adopt experiential teaching methods with the teacher acting as a facilitator, learning guide and adviser;

(vii) Access good practices of relevant non-formal and informal learning activities, resources and methods available with NGOs and in the community;

(c) Concerning teaching and learning materials:

(i) Make sure that human rights education materials stem from the human rights principles as embedded in the relevant cultural contexts as well as historical and social developments;

(ii) Encourage the collection, sharing, translation and adaptation of human rights education materials;

(iii) Review and revise textbooks and other educational materials of the whole curriculum to conform with human rights principles;

(iv) Support the development of different educational materials and resources that conform with human rights principles such as teacher guides, manuals, textbooks, comic strips, and audio-visual and creative arts support materials that encourage active participation in the above-mentioned teaching and learning approaches;

(v) Disseminate human rights education materials in sufficient numbers and in appropriate languages (in multilingual countries a thorough survey of the linguistic diversity in schools has to be done so that materials are developed in understood languages), and train relevant personnel in their use;

(vi) Ensure that these resources conform to human rights principles and relate to real-life situations by having them reviewed by a specialized national team prior to publication;

(vii) Allow the publication, widespread dissemination of and access to a variety of educational resources such as those produced by NGOs;

(d) Concerning support to teaching and learning:

(i) Collect and disseminate examples of good practices in teaching and learning in human rights education;

(ii) Establish easily accessible resource centres, including libraries and databases, on teaching and learning in human rights education;

(iii) Facilitate the networking and exchange of human rights education practices among educators and among students;

(iv) Promote research into the teaching and learning of human rights education;

(e) Concerning the use of new information technologies:

(i) Establish specialized web sites related to human rights education;

(ii) Develop distance learning programmes linked to schools;

(iii) Train students and teachers in the use of new information technologies for human rights education;

(iv) Encourage on-line discussion groups on human rights topics with students and teachers in other schools locally, nationally and internationally;

(f) Concerning evaluation and assessment:

(i) Develop indicators, identify adequate methods and design appropriate tools for reviewing, evaluating and measuring the processes, outcomes and impact of human rights education;

(ii) Use evaluation and assessment methods that are appropriate for human rights education such as observation and reporting by teachers and fellow students; recording students' experience, personal work and acquired skills and competencies (student portfolio); and students' self-assessment;

(iii) Apply human rights principles to evaluating and assessing students' achievements in the whole curriculum such as transparency (explanation of criteria and reasons for grading; information of students and parents), equality (same criteria used for all students and by all teachers), fairness (lack of abuse of assessment).

E. Education and professional development of teachers and other educational personnel

20. Introducing human rights education in primary and secondary education implies that the school becomes a model of human rights learning and practice. Within the school community, teachers, as the main depositories of the curriculum, play a key role in reaching this aim.

21. For the teachers to fulfil this major responsibility effectively, a number of factors need to be considered. Firstly, teachers are themselves rights-holders. The recognition of and respect for their professional status and the upholding of their self-esteem are a prerequisite for them to promote human rights education. The school management and leadership, on the one hand, and educational policy makers on the other must support and empower them to innovate in teaching and learning practices. Appropriate education and professional development of teachers and other educational personnel must be ensured.

22. Within the school community, opportunities for awareness-raising about human rights and for training in human rights education should not exist only for teachers, but also for head teachers and members of the school management, school

inspectors, administrative staff in schools, educational officials and planners in local and national authorities, and parents.

23. The design and organization of appropriate education and professional development is shared among multiple actors owing to the complex training systems and to the different contexts: the Ministry of Education; universities through their faculties of education and other departments, including human rights institutes and UNESCO Chairs for human rights education; teacher training institutions; unions and professional organizations of teachers and other personnel; national human rights institutions; NGOs; and international and regional intergovernmental organizations.

24. Policy and legal guidelines provide the framework for the implementation of training activities and, in order to reflect and foster a human rights culture, the training curriculum, the teaching and learning content and practice, and educational policies must be coherent.

25. Given the role model function of teachers, effective human rights education implies that they master and transmit relevant values, knowledge, skills, attitudes and practices. Education and professional development must foster their knowledge about, commitment to and motivation for human rights. Similarly, human rights principles need to be essential criteria for the professional performance and conduct of other educational personnel.

26. The training and professional development of teachers and other personnel must be tailored according to each contextual need and target group. It includes advocacy and awareness-raising of teachers and other educational professionals, training the trainers, initial/pre-service training, regular and continuous development through in-service training, training specialized teachers in human rights education, and the introduction of human rights principles into the training curriculum of all primary and secondary school teachers.

27. Policies and practices of education and professional development of teachers and other personnel should take into account the following elements and approaches:

(a) Developing training curricula on human rights education, including the following elements:

(i) Knowledge about human rights, their universality, indivisibility and interdependence, and their protection mechanisms;

(ii) Educational theories underlying human rights education, including links between formal, non-formal and informal education;[c]

(iii) Links between human rights education and other similar types of education (such as education for sustainable development, peace education, global education, multicultural education, citizenship and values education);

(iv) Learning objectives of human rights education, particularly human rights education skills and competencies;

[c] In general, "formal education" refers to school, vocational training and university education; "non-formal education" refers to adult learning and forms of education complementary to the previous one, such as community servicing and extracurriculum activities; and "informal education" refers to activities developed outside the education system, such as those carried out are non-governmental organizations.

(v) Teaching and learning methodologies for human rights education and the role of teachers in human rights education;

(vi) Social skills and leadership styles of teachers and other educational personnel that are democratic and coherent in terms of human rights;

(vii) Teachers' and students' rights and responsibilities and their participation in school life; identifying and handling human rights abuses;

(viii) The school as a human rights-based community;

(ix) Relations within the classroom and between the classroom, the school and the wider community;

(x) Collaborative methods and teamwork in the classroom and in the school;

(xi) Evaluation and assessment of human rights education;

(xii) Information on existing educational materials for human rights education and the capacity to review and choose from among them as well as to develop new materials;

(xiii) School self-evaluation and development planning based on human rights principles;

(b) Developing and using appropriate training methodologies:

(i) Appropriate training methods for the adult learner, in particular learner-centred approaches, and addressing motivation, self-esteem and emotional development leading to awareness-raising on values and behaviour;[d]

(ii) Appropriate methods for training in human rights education such as using participatory, interactive, cooperative and experience- and practice-based methods; linking theory to practice; testing learned techniques in the work situation, particularly the classroom;

(c) Developing and disseminating appropriate training resources and materials:

(i) Collection, dissemination and exchange of good practices in training in human rights education;

(ii) Stocktaking and dissemination of training methodologies developed by NGOs and other sectors of the civil society;

(iii) Development of materials as part of in-service training activities;

(iv) Development of on-line materials and resources;

(d) Networking and cooperation among different education and training providers;

(e) Promotion and participation in international education and training activities and exchanges;

(f) Evaluation of training activities including self-evaluation and perceptions of trainees' on the relevance, utility and impact of training activities.

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[d] See the OHCHR publication *Human Rights Training* on basic methodological principles for adult training.